

CAN FARRAR FREE "CARMEN" FROM ITS HOODOO?



JANE NORIA

LINA CAVALIERI
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GERALDINE FARRAR

EMMA CALVÉ
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Announcement That She Will Open Season at Metropolitan in Bizet's Work Creates Special Interest Among Operagoers

THE announcement that a performance of "Carmen" will open the coming season of opera at the Metropolitan Opera House creates special interest. That is because the managers have long been hunting for an interpreter of the role of the heroine of Bizet's work who would satisfy the New York operagoing public. Many prima donnas have essayed the part in recent years and only one has gained even a partial success. The opera was not given once last season.

That a season at the Metropolitan should close without a single performance of "Carmen" was something to cause astonishment among directors of opera houses the world over. For Bizet's work is one of the most popular in the repertoire of every foreign musical theatre. It was sung more than 2,000 times last year in Germany. Its vogue at the Opera Comique in Paris is as great as it ever was. It stands in the same relation to the repertoire of the second French opera house that "Faust" does to the National Academy of Music. In the other European countries it is one of the most popular of operas.

The object of this opera by the Metropolitan opera house has not been due in the least to Mr. Gatti-Casazza's lack of admiration for it. On the contrary, he thinks that it and "Faust" are the two French operas that have justified their reputation the world over. He even tried with the assistance of Arturo Toscanini in the orchestra, Enrico Caruso on the stage and the rest of the Metropolitan's best artists to make a success of a revival of the work during his first season.

Maria Gay, the Spanish mezzo-soprano, who had been proclaimed the best of "Carmen" from one end of Europe to the other, was imported to sing the title role. But New York rejected her just as it has every other interpreter of the part except one since Emma Calvé made the part her own at the Metropolitan. And this one singer who was accepted as the heroine of the Bizet opera did not sing at the Metropolitan opera house. She was at the Manhattan Opera House, and for several weeks she made a real success in the role. She was Mme. Bressler-Glanoff, a French woman.

There is a long list of those who tried to take the place of the radiant Emma Calvé. In the consulship of Maurice Grau, Mme. Calvé used to return every second year to the Metropolitan opera house. Then her performance of "Carmen" was counted on to bring success to the season. No other performance was ever so successful. No other singer ever drew so many in a single character. That she practically drew in no other work without a collection of stars about her did not interfere with her preeminence in this part. It was equivalent to a sold out house to announce Mme. Calvé in "Carmen." This state of affairs continued from 1894 for about eight years. New York never saw the opera of "Carmen" so frequently, never enjoyed it so much and never so lauded the woman who sang the principal role. That Mme. Calvé on her last visit here failed to awaken any echoes of this old time triumph does not alter the fact that she enjoyed for those years a glorious supremacy in the part.

And the result has been that no other singer has been able to make the slightest impression in the role. During Oscar Hammerstein's first season at the Manhattan Opera House Cleofonte Campanini arranged a charming production of "Carmen," which had in Clotilde Bressler-Glanoff a delightful representative of the heroine. The production

had a characteristically Gallic interpretation of the opera, which was in marked contrast to the Teutonic representations of the work given by Heinrich Conried's singers, with the exception of Emma Calvé. Mme. Bressler-Glanoff's popularity scarcely survived a second season, although Mme. Calvé's supremacy was unshaken for nearly a decade.

In the meantime the search for a "Carmen" continued actively. The loss of such an opera from the repertoire when there was such a demand for French works could not easily be borne. One need only look through the list of aspirants for Mme. Calvé's satin slippers and her Spanish crepe shawl to realize that the impresarios have been busy.

Mr. Conried began his efforts with Anna Arnaud, a French singer retired and teaching in New York. She had performed the part abroad and her first appearance was unfortunately on one of the so-called "hoodoo" Saturday nights. During the first act the bridge fell down and the traces of that disaster were discernible for years afterward over the Conried dynasty. Then there came the following:

OLIVIA FREEMAN—First of the popular members of the Metropolitan Opera House to attempt to win the laurels of Emma Calvé. Had sung the part with great success in Munich and other German cities. Made her first appearance with Enrico Caruso as Don Jose. Astonished the audience by being as black as Topsy in the first act; grew lighter as the evening advanced, and her friends urged her to lighten the color of her complexion. In spite of the African tones in her epidermis the interpretation was good and suggested the Scandinavian Peninsula instead of the Campanile swinging in the midday sun of Seville.

MARIA GAY—Spanish mezzo, native of Barcelona and praised in London, Paris and St. Petersburg for her wonderfully realistic and vivid performance of the Spanish gypsy. Imported especially for the Metropolitan by Gatti-Casazza and Dimpfel. Wonderful revival of "Carmen" with Caruso and Farrar in the other roles; Toscanini conducting. Mrs. Gay made a complete failure as "Carmen" and the opera was sung but a few times.

Then Oscar Hammerstein took a hand in the search for a new "Carmen." He did not renew the contract of Mme. Bressler-Glanoff, who had sung the role so much during the first two seasons that there was no further demand to hear her. He tried:

JEANNE GREVILLE-REACHE—Deep voiced mezzo, who, unlike any "Carmen" singer in her school, revealed not even the remotest acquaintance with "Carmen" when she set out to sing the role.

MARY GAY—Italian soprano, who made her career in Germany and failed to make any definite impression, as she fell between the artistic standards of the two countries. Suggested especially by band of Chianti and Cervantesworth.

LINA CAVALIERI—Suspected of the power to reveal the warmth of the gypsy temperament and bring some element of her own personality into the delineation of the power of the enchantress. Turned out to be most harmless and as lacking in any decisive character as it is possible to imagine.

MANOIRITE SYLVA—Successful in singing and more graceful and appealing than any of her predecessors so long as she sang at the Manhattan Opera House. Altogether colorless in the greater spaces of the Metropolitan Opera House when she went there to sing with the Philadelphia company.

This was the list of singers who had been heard in the two opera houses up to the time when Mary Garden announced that she would appear in the part. Her one performance in the Metropolitan Opera House was not of a kind to bring forth any demand for a

repetition. Thus another "Carmen" went by the board.

Now Geraldine Farrar, who ought to find the role perfectly well suited to her, is going to undertake the part. It seems as if it ought to be possible to find a singer who will take the hoodoo off the opera. But not infrequently pessimistic Mr. Gatti-Casazza has some rather discouraging views on the subject.

"So much has been written and told about the famous 'Carmen' of the past," he told the reporter last spring, "that it is practically impossible for any woman to meet the expectations of the public. They demand from a singer more than is possible for any of them to achieve with the role. That is the reason it has been so difficult for any singer in recent years to make a success with this part."

Maybe the director of the Metropolitan Opera House expressed this opinion only as a salve to Emmy Destinn, who was most anxious to sing "Carmen," and to Margarethe Matzenauer, who has made a great success in the role in Germany.

The Supplies of an Army

The work of keeping up the supplies of an army in the field is as difficult and as important as the moving of the army itself, and the existence of the army depends on the regularity of its supplies. How this work is done is told in an interesting article in the special war issue of the *Scientific American*, from which the following extracts are obtained:

1. The service performed in the rear of the army, established in the national territory or in the governments of the occupied countries for the purpose of collecting the resources.

2. The service of the line of communications; the duty of the commander of which is to provide for the replacement of the stores consumed by the army, and the transportation, subsistence and quartering of all troops, prisoners, sick and wounded passing over the line, and also providing for its protection.

3. The supply of the troops in the field during active operations.

These three services are entirely separate, but work in conjunction with each other to carry out the main object for which they are created—the supply and maintenance of an army in the field.

The success or failure of the campaign depends upon the proper operation of the service of the line of communications, and this important position is always assigned to a general officer of recognized ability and discretion. He is assisted by a large and numerous staff to enable him to carry out the varied and multitudinous duties assigned to him, and in addition has a competent force of all arms of the service to preserve order along the line of communication, guard the depots of supply and protect the line from attacks by the enemy. Such officer is subordinate to the commander of the troops in the field, but his duties and responsibilities are second only to such officer.

The commander of the line of communications must then see that his depots are adequately supplied, and must forward each day to the troops the necessary supplies for man and horse, and likewise care for the evacuation of the sick and wounded and the custody and care of the prisoners. To enable him to do this, all the necessary field equipments are provided; for instance, a field bakery company, and equipment for each division supplied by the line of communications.

The field bakery in our army consists of twelve knuckdown bake ovens with all the necessary equipment for producing bread and the tentage in which to install the dough troughs and shelter the men. Each oven is capable of producing 2,500 rations of garrison bread a day, or 1,500 rations of field bread; this is bread produced in such a manner

that it has not as great a "pile" as ordinary (or garrison) bread, and being baked in a moist shower oven, and no leaves allowed to touch (or "kiss"), is completely enveloped with a good, thick crust, thus permitting the bread to be readily shipped in wagons; and its freedom from moisture renders it possible to be kept in good condition for a week or ten days. So that each field bakery can produce daily 20,000 rations of garrison bread, or 10,000 rations of field bread, sufficient to supply a division.

The supplies an army carries with it may be divided into two classes; those carried by the troops themselves and those which are carried in the trains.

The troops having to march many miles a day, starting early in the morning and probably not completing the march until late in the afternoon, would suffer greatly from lack of food if compelled to await the arrival of the train carrying the same. Therefore it follows that if troops are to be fed in the field they must carry rations with them, and the rations consumed during the day must be replaced by the train at night.

A ration is the allowance of food for one person for one day, and comprises various articles termed components. It is interesting to note that the Turks in

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the fourteenth century first established the allowance of a soldier's daily ration, and in the same century first had regularly organized supply trains to follow their troops.

Each man carries two days rations, and the unconsumed portion of the day's ration issued the night before, for the noonday meal.

MARIA GAY
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The transportation attached to organizations is grouped under the following heads:

(a) The trains assigned to organizations smaller than a brigade, designated combat and field trains, respectively. The ration section of the field train carries two days field, one day's reserve ration, and for each animal two days grain ration.

(b) The trains assigned to division designated ammunition, supply, sanitary and engineer trains, respectively.

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